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A publication of  the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church

Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. –Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. –Joshua 22:5

Questions for Reflection or Discussion



Observation—*What do I see?*

- 1 The events surrounding Jesus' betrayal were distressing to **all** involved—to Jesus **and** to the twelve. Matthew's account **applies the same word** to the twelve as to Jesus (see Matthew 26:22 & 37). What additional detail does Luke 22:45 add to explain the disciples' failure in Jesus' hour of need? Adding in the **pre-failure** hubris displayed in Mark 14:27 & 31, describe the ups and downs of these hours.

Interpretation—*What does it mean?*

- 2 **For whom** do you think the events of these hours were more difficult—for the twelve or for Jesus? **To what degree** do you think Jesus' success in withstanding temptation was due to his divinity versus being due to his reliance as a human on divine strengthening? **Why** do you think that?
- 3 **To what degree** do you think the disciples' failure in withstanding temptation was to be expected?

Application—*What do I do with this?*

- 4 Like Peter, James and John, Jesus calls **us** to be on the alert, anticipating his return. (Notice that in his final parable Jesus **thrice** urges us to “be on the alert”—Mark 13:29–37.) What can you do **today** to ready yourself for Christ's certain return? Be very concrete and specific.
- 5 Jesus was honest with God about his struggles—but ultimately said, “Not my will but yours be done.” When was a time when, uncertain about God's will, you followed Jesus' example of submission?
- 6 When Peter, James and John failed Jesus in his hour of need, he extended grace to them. When you've failed shamefully, how quickly do you admit failure and ask God for his grace?
 
(Even if you're slow at the start, how consistently do you—like the faithful tortoise—eventually get there?)
- 7 In his greatest hour of need, Jesus kept in mind to whom he was praying: his loving, Abba Father. Are you satisfied with the “warmth and trust” of your prayers? What can you do to increase it?

1 Luke 22:45 adds the detail that the the disciples “slept due to sorrow”.

“Ups” include:

- just five days earlier Jesus had ridden in to the praises of multitudes (Mark 11)
- for the next four days, Jesus silenced all his enemies (Mark chs. 11-13)
- now it was Passover, one of the most joyous celebrations of the Jewish year (Mark 14)

“Downs” include:

- that confusing, embarrassing footwashing incident (John 13)
- Jesus’ prediction that one of them would betray him, and all would deny him (Mark 14)
- Jesus’ teaching that he soon would leave them; sorrow filled their hearts (John 14-16)

2 Clearly the events of these hours were more difficult for Jesus—but the twelved showed it more! According to the wisdom gained thru the Council of Chalcedon (see last week’s *Digging Deeper*) Jesus’ ultimate success in withstanding temptation was guaranteed due to his **having** a divine nature (ie, Jesus was “impeccable”—incapable of sinning), but we don’t know **for certain how** he accomplished this extraordinary act of obedience. My conviction is that he accomplished it through his human nature relying moment-by-moment on the Holy Spirit’s divine strengthening. I think this because Jesus, as the “Last Adam” (Romans 5:14 & 1 Corinthians 15:46), needed to succeed at the same task given to Adam in the Garden of Eden (and he, of course, had only a human nature). Adam the First failed to rely on God as he should have; Adam the Second succeeded.

3 Besides Jesus’ prediction that they would fail (which, of course, made it a certainty!), even without this divine prediction their track record would lead one to assume that they’d fail. Even as they gathered for the Passover Meal they were arguing over who was the greatest (Luke 22:24-27)! **Not** an encouraging sign.

4 You may need to “prime the pump”, so be prepared with your own answer to this question. (But wait for others to think and answer. Check your watch—20 seconds feels like an eternity!)

5 ditto

6 ditto

7 ditto

Sermon Summary Mark 14:32-42

Do you remember the confident declarations of loyalty Jesus' disciples made? Peter insisted: "Even though all may fall away, yet I will not...and they all were saying the same thing also." (Mark 14:29-31) In today's text we see that Jesus had to wrestle with the prospect of the cross without the support of his closest friends. Jesus yielded to God's will—but the disciples yielded to their weariness! After the Passover meal, at which Jesus instituted the New Covenant, he and his disciples departed for the Garden of Gethsemane. He instructed most of them to wait while he, Peter, James and John—his most trusted friends, his inner circle—proceeded in a bit further. These three had access to Jesus that the other disciples did not, so it makes sense that Jesus would seek their company on the eve of his crucifixion. . If Jesus could trust anyone to be there for him, surely these were the guys! All three had recently boasted that even if the others fell away, they would not. They were ready to die for Jesus—or so they thought. But we discover, their confidence was misplaced.

Then, Jesus "began to be very distressed and troubled, and he said to them, 'My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death; remain here and keep watch'" (v. 33-34). Jesus was overwhelmed by what he was about to face. Notice that he opens up about his fears with his friends. He verbalized what he was feeling. He didn't leave his friends in the dark. He didn't want to suffer alone. He wanted their support. How about us? Are we vulnerable, at least with our closest friends? Do we even have a close friend? Perhaps that's the more important question. In his time of need, Jesus asked his closest friends to help bear his burden. Do we?

Jesus knew the cross was coming. He had spoken many times of his impending death (John 12:23–26). And yet when the time actually came, in his humanity he vacillated (Mark 14:35-36)! Remember: Jesus is both human and divine. He knew full well that divine justice required that God's wrath be poured out on human sin—and that he was the human upon whom it would be poured in full measure. At that crucial time, he wanted the support of his closest friends. But when he went to check on them, he found them sleeping! While Jesus found all three asleep, notice that he called out Peter (v. 37). Peter was the acknowledged leader of the twelve. And, did you also notice that Jesus addressed him as "Simon"? (Peter, the nickname Jesus gave him, means "rock"—but he wasn't acting very rock-like at the moment.) Years later Peter would write something very interesting to the church (1 Peter 5:8–9). Peter would eventually learn his lesson, but it wouldn't be that night. Have you ever been called-out on something, and there is just nothing you can say? You are just "guilty as charged"? You can't even think of an excuse, much less a justification! Well, that's how Peter, James and John were (v. 40). For the first time in Peter's life, he was speechless! This happened three times.

In Jesus' prayer to his Father, although he expressed the understandable desire to not go to the cross, he ended his prayer with "yet not my will, but yours" (v. 35-36). These words reflect the truth that Jesus' desire to obey his Father was greater than his desire to serve himself. You see, while Jesus' human will was distinct from his Father's will, it was never opposed to it. Oh, if that was always true of us! But we can align our will with God's. We can choose to die to self and live for God. Jesus' decision in the garden changed everything. In the first garden, the garden of Eden, Adam said to the Father, "Not your will but mine be done," and all of creation was plunged into sin. In this second garden, the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus, the second Adam, says, "Not my will but yours be done," and the redemption and salvation of all creation begins! While Eden brought death, Gethsemane brings life!

While his closest friends failed to keep watch as their Lord requested, Jesus followed his Father's will. He always does. From this point on, there was no more struggle, no more questioning. An otherworldly calm seems to have come over him. Jesus allowed events to proceed. He was not—and never was—the unwilling victim of these events. He knew that he was in the center of His Father's will and that was enough.

Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

Temptation and testing are inevitable—failure is not!

Let's use the "Five Question Bible Study" method to learn how to "resist in the evil day"...

Monday— Ephesians 6:10-13.

Tuesday— Ephesians 6:14.

Wednesday— Ephesians 6:15.

Thursday— Ephesians 6:16.

Friday— Ephesians 6:17.

Saturday— Ephesians 6:18.

Need help resisting temptation?

For free, confidential help, write to:
BiblicalHopeAndHelp@gmail.com

Bible Text: _____

Date: _____



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) it is found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text? [and what was their response?]